

# Children’s Speech and Language

# Therapy Service

# Communication checklist

# for children aged 2-5 years

## **Is a Request for the Involvement of the**

## **Children’s Speech and Language Therapy Team (S&LT) Required?**

This guide is designed to help parents / carers and professionals decide whether a request for the involvement of the Children’s Speech and Language Therapy Service is recommended.

Please look at the table appropriate for the child’s age and tick the relevant descriptors that best describes their speech, language and communication skill. If more than one language is spoken at home, please only tick a box if the child is having the same difficulty in all of the languages they use. If the child meets the criteria for ‘specialist support’, please send the relevant page, with the ‘request for involvement of S&LT’ form by email to [dbth.paediatricsadmin@nhs.net](mailto:dbth.paediatricsadmin@nhs.net) **or by post to Children’s Speech and Language Therapy Referrals, Child Development Centre, Doncaster Royal Infirmary, Armthorpe Road, Doncaster, DN2 5LT**

# At ANY AGE, please make an immediate referral if a child:

* Is stammering (dysfluent) or if parent reports hearing stammering

OR

* Has difficulty with eating or drinking in terms of mechanics of chewing and swallowing (not sensory / behavioural feeding difficulties)
* Nasal regurgitation of food
* Most speech sounds made at the back of the throat
* Significantly nasal sounding speech

**If the child is showing the difficulties listed below, please do not refer to S&LT. Please see**[**these resources**](#socialcomm) **for further information on how to support these difficulties** (press ctrl + click on the link above or see page 10 of this document)**.**

**Liaise with your health visitor or educational setting to discuss the possibility of a referral for a General Development Assessment.**

* Avoids eye contact
* Prefers to be on their own
* Follows own agenda (does things on their own terms)
* Does not respond to their name
* Does not use verbal or non-verbal methods to communicate their needs
* Little or no pretend play

**Age 2-2 ½ Years**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| [**Typical development**](#universal)  **Universal strategies/ resources** (press ctrl + click on link above  or see page 8 of this document) | | [**Targeted**](#Targeted)  **Targeted support/ intervention**  (press ctrl + click on the link above  or see page 9 of this document) | | **Specialist**  **Refer to S&LT Outpatient service** | | **Specialist**  **Refer to S&LT Child Development Centre service** | |
| Plays with a range of activities/ toys |  | Pretend play emerging but not fully developed |  | **Must meet ALL the criteria below** | | **Must meet ALL the criteria below** | |
| Demonstrates pretend play |  | Fleeting attention to own choice of activity |  | Able to attend to joint activities for 2 minutes |  | Very limited response to spoken language (e.g. does not respond to names of everyday familiar objects) |  |
| Enjoys playing with other people |  | Understands names of familiar objects and actions |  | Very limited response to spoken language (e.g. does not respond to names of everyday familiar objects) |  | Using non-verbal methods to communicate their needs (e.g. leading adult / pointing) |  |
| Able to concentrate for short spells |  | Uses less than 50 words |  |  | | Known to Paediatrician OR has involvement from other therapies |  |
| Uses 50 words or more (object names and action words |  | Understands some names of familiar objects and actions |  |
| Understands everyday object names and action words |  | Responds to simple instructions (e.g. get your shoes) but not longer instructions (e.g. get your shoes and your coat) |  |  | |
| Understands and uses simple 2-word phrases and instructions |  | Speech very unclear | |
| Speech can be understood by close family |  |
| **SPEECH SOUNDS TO EXPECT:** p, b, t, d, n, m | | | | | | | |

**Age 2 ½ - 3 Years**

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| [**Typical development**](#universal)  **Universal strategies/ resources**  (press ctrl + click on link above  or see page 8 of this document) | | [**Targeted**](#Targeted)  **Targeted support/ intervention**  (press ctrl + click on the link above  or see page 9 of this document) | | **Specialist**  **Refer to S&LT Outpatient service** | | **Specialist**  **Refer to S&LT Child Development Centre service** | |
| Concentrates on activities of own choice for several minutes |  | Fleeting attention to own choice of activity |  | Able to attend to joint activities for 3 minutes    **AND** one of the criteria below: |  | Very limited response to spoken language (e.g. does not respond to names of everyday familiar objects) |  |
| Enjoys playing with other people and enjoys talking with adults and other children |  | Emerging pretend play but not fully developed |  | Very limited response to spoken language (e.g. does not respond to names of everyday familiar objects) |  | Using non-verbal methods to communicate their needs (e.g. leading adult / pointing) |  |
| Uses wide range of different types of everyday words (nouns, verbs and simple adjectives) |  | Understands names of familiar objects and actions |  | Speech cannot be understood by close family member, e.g. child is only using vowels or unusual sounds |  | Known to Paediatrician OR has involvement from other therapies |  |
| Understands a range of simple instructions and action words |  | Uses less than 50 words |  | Child has accessed [targeted](#Targeted) support and made no progress after 3 month period of practising ideas and strategies |  |  | |
| Understands who? what? where? questions about the ‘here and now’ |  | Using 1-2 word phrases in their first language |  |
| Can be understood by close family in a known context |  |
| **SPEECH SOUNDS TO EXPECT:** p, b, t, d, n, m, w The final sound of words may be missed off | | | | | | | |

**Age 3-3 ½ Years**

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| [**Typical development**](#universal)  **Universal strategies/ resources**  (press ctrl + click on link above  or see page 8 of this document) | | [**Targeted**](#Targeted)  **Targeted support/ intervention**  (press ctrl + click on the link above  or see page 9 of this document) | | **Specialist**  **Refer to S&LT Outpatient service** | | **Specialist**  **Refer to S&LT Child Development Centre service** | |
| Can still only listen if not involved in another activity. Needs to stop the activity in order to listen |  | Cannot maintain attention to own choice of activity |  | Able to attend to joint activities for 4 minutes  **AND** one of the criteria below**:** |  | Unable to follow simple instructions |  |
| Can listen to others in 1:1 or small groups, if the conversation interests them |  | Difficulties with listening to others and /or taking turns with others |  | Not using 2-3 word phrases |  | Using verbal or non-verbal methods to communicate their needs (e.g. leading adult / pointing) |  |
| Enjoys playing with others with a wide range of toys/ activities |  | Difficulties with understanding simple prepositions (in, on, under) |  | Unable to follow simple instructions / simple questions |  | Known to Paediatrician OR has involvement from other therapies |  |
| Can understand the uses of objects (e.g. what do we use to cut things?) |  | Attempting to use 2-3 word phrases |  | Close family members find them difficult to understand and unintelligible to unfamiliar people |  |  | |
| Understands simple prepositions, such as ‘under, in, on’ |  | Frequently difficult to understand to unfamiliar people |  | Element of disordered speech, e.g.  Sounds f, v, z, s, sh never used  1 consonant used for many other consonants   * final sounds are not present in words i.e. cup is ‘cu’, pig is ‘pi’ etc. |  |
| Uses sentences of 3 or more words |  |  | |
| Speech may still be difficult to understand, especially to unfamiliar people |  |
| **SPEECH SOUNDS TO EXPECT:** p, b, t, d, n, m, w, s, z, f, v, sh | | | | | | | |

**Age 3½ - 4 Years**

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| [**Typical development**](#universal)  **Universal strategies/ resources** (press ctrl + click on link above  or see page 8 of this document) | | [**Targeted**](#Targeted)  **Targeted support/ intervention**  (press ctrl + click on the link above  or see page 9 of this document) | | **Specialist**  **Refer to S&LT Outpatient service** | | **Specialist**  **Refer to S&LT Child Development Centre service** | |
| Can still only listen if not engaged in another activity, but can shift own attention |  | Difficulties with shifting attention from activity to listening |  | Able to attend to joint activities for 4 minutes  **AND** one of the criteria below**:** |  | Able to attend to joint activities for 4 minutes |  |
| Can listen to stories with increasing attention and recall |  | Gaps in vocabulary knowledge |  | Using 2-3 word phrases only |  | Unable to follow simple instructions |  |
| Understands prepositions (such as in, on, under, behind, next to) |  | Only using 3-4 word sentences |  | Unable to follow simple instructions/ questions |  | Using verbal or non-verbal methods to communicate their needs (e.g. leading adult / pointing) |  |
| Can use sentences of 5-6 words |  | Speech cannot be understood by unfamiliar people |  |
| Can retell simple past event in order, using simple phrases (e.g. went down slide, hurt finger) |  | Difficulties understanding prepositions |  | Element of disordered speech, e.g.  Sounds f, v, z, s, sh never used  1 consonant used for many other consonants  final sounds are not present in words i.e. cup is ‘cu’, pig is ‘pi’ etc |  | Known to Paediatrician OR has involvement from other therapies |  |
| Uses past tense ‘–ed’ ending, e.g. jumped |  | Unable to talk about past events, only about the ‘here and now’ |
| Speech may still be difficult to understand especially to unfamiliar people | Can sometimes be difficult to understand to unfamiliar people in some contexts |
| f, v, s, sh sounds used but not consistently  consonant blends are still not used (e.g. ‘ky’ for ‘sky’ |  |  | |  | | | |
| **SPEECH SOUNDS TO EXPECT:** p, b, t, d, n, m, w, s, z, f, v, sh | | | | | | | |

**Age 4 – 5 Years**

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| Can sustain attentive listening, responding to what they hear with relevant comments, actions or questions |  | Difficulties with attentive listening |  | Able to attend to joint activities for at least 4 minutes  **AND** one of the criteria below |  | **Must have** 1:1 support in school (specify) for a programme  **and**  be able to attend to joint activities for 4 minutes  **AND ONE OF THE CRITERIA BELOW** |  |
| Can maintain attention, concentrate and sit quietly when appropriate |  | Difficulties maintaining attention and concentration |  | Does not consistently understand who? what? where? types of questions |  |
| Shows two-channelled attention – can listen and do something at the same time for short period |  | Unable to listen at the same time as carrying out an activity |  | Finds it difficult to respond to instructions with 2-3 parts |  |
| Can follow 2-3 part spoken instructions (e.g. get your coat then line up) |  | Can usually be understood by family members but makes some speech sound errors |  | Difficulties with understanding stories and sequencing events |  | Unable to follow simple instructions |  |
| Understands *why?* and *how?* questions (by age 5) |  | Significant difficulties with understanding and using vocabulary |  | Spoken sentences are very short or have unusual word order |  | Non-verbal or only using 1-2 word phrases |  |
| Uses long sentences. There may still be grammatical errors (e.g. breaked) |  |  | | Speech is difficult to understand, even in context |  |  | |
| Able to retell stories and past events in an organised way, linked ideas with words like *and, because, but* (by 5) |  | Element of disordered speech, e.g.   * Sounds f, v, z, s, sh not used * 1 consonant used for many other consonants   final sounds are not present in words e.g. cup is ‘cu’, pig is ‘pi’ |  |
| Can sometimes be difficult to understand when speaking in long sentences or when upset/ excited |  |
| May still make some errors with blends (e.g. sp, fl, tr)  Not consistently using *sh,ch,j,y r,th* |  |
| **SPEECH SOUNDS TO EXPECT:** p, b, t, d, n, m, w, s, z, f, v, sh | | | | | | | |

**Un****iversal support and strategies**

**Doncaster**

* Information, advice and support for parents and professionals
  + South Yorkshire Talking Together (SYTT) website <https://sy-talkingtogether.co.uk/>
* Training for community sector staff teams
  + SYTT Universal Training – see information on the SYTT website:

<https://sy-talkingtogether.co.uk/doncaster/training/>

**Bassetlaw**

* Information, advice and support for parents, carers, families and practitioners:-
* [‘Start Talking Together’](https://www.nottshelpyourself.org.uk/kb5/nottinghamshire/directory/advice.page?id=3gb51AIRuLU) - Notts Help Yourself Parent and Carer Zone.
* Language for Life-Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust:-
* <https://www.nottinghamshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/language-for-life>
* [www.facebook.com/nottslanguageforlife](http://www.facebook.com/nottslanguageforlife)
* [www.instragram.com/nottslang4life/](http://www.instragram.com/nottslang4life/)

**Targeted suppor****t / intervention**

**Doncaster**

* **Training for Early Years Practitioners**
  + SYTT Enhanced Training – see information on the SYTT website: <https://sy-talkingtogether.co.uk/doncaster/training/>
* **Interventions** 
  + For children aged 2 to 2 ½ years - see SYTT website for further information
    - Home Talk (for children using 0-30 words)
    - Growing Talk (for children using 30-50 words
  + For children age 2 ½ to 4 years
    - Growing Talk
    - SYTT assessment and strategy tool to support settings
  + For children aged 4 to 5 years
    - SYTT assessment & strategy tool to support settings
    - Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI) (if available in school setting)

**Bassetlaw**

* **Interventions** 
  + For children aged 2 to 2 ½ years with expressive language difficulties
    - Home Talk (for children using 0-30 words) <https://www.nottinghamshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/language-for-life>
    - Little Talkers (for children using 30-50 words and not linking words <https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/early-years-and-childcare/childrens-centre-service>
    - Children’s Centre Service  [Children's Centre Service | Nottinghamshire County Council](https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/early-years-and-childcare/childrens-centre-service)
    - Children Centres’ (CC) Main Sites Reception Telephone Numbers:- Manton CC 0115 9773758, Hallcroft CC 0115 9773754 and West Bassetlaw (Langold) CC 0115 9773759
  + For children aged 4 to 5 years
    - Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI) (if available in school setting)
* **Training for Early Years practitioners.**
* [Early years education and childcare training | Nottinghamshire County Council](https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/early-years-and-childcare/childcare-providers/early-years-education-and-childcare-training)

**Resources to support fundamentals of communication**

Children need fundamental foundation skills to develop communication. Please double click on the word document icons below to access the resources. If you are unable to access the documents via the icons, you can find a copy of all the resources below at: <https://www.dbth.nhs.uk/services/clinical-therapies/speech-language-therapy/>

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Attention and listening development |  |  | To share attention and engage in interactions with others |  |
| To take turns within interactions |  |  | To use and respond to eye contact |  |
| To use and understand gestures, facial expressions and body language |  |  |  |  |

For children where social communication is the main barrier to successful communication, the resources below may be useful:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Social Stories |  |
| Conversational skills |  |